

1-35 Aid Station pushes patient care limits

**Story and photo by
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BAGHDAD, Iraq—Soldiers who work at the Task Force 1-35 Armor aid station, which is part of Task Force 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, were recognized Nov. 8 for outstanding performance of their duties during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Col. Anthony Young, chief of staff for the 30th Medical Brigade, spoke to the medics, thanking them for their hard work and encouraging them to keep going strong.

The platoon was issued a certificate of appreciation “for the medical care they provided for Coalition Joint Task Force - 7 personnel,” Young said.

The aid station combat medics were the only medical unit on the Coalition Provisional Authority presidential palace compound when they arrived earlier this year. Young said the soldiers did a fantastic job of adapting to an unusual and dif-

ficult situation.

“None of the U.S. Army units here had acceptable medical assets for themselves,” said Dr. (Lt. Col.) Stephen Marks, battalion surgeon for Task Force 1-35. “By default, due to our location, we began to provide medical care to coalition personnel in the area.”

The aid station, Marks said, was equipped to provide medical care only to the approximately 750 soldiers who make up their battalion. Instead, the station took up responsibility for nearly 5,000 male and female coalition members from all countries, including military personnel, civil service personnel and employees of contractors.

“We took care of a lot of sick calls for CPA personnel, and have done (medical evacuations) for many soldiers and civilians,” Marks said.

Pfc. Crizam Carlos, combat medic and guidon bearer assigned to the aid station, was one of the soldiers honored during the ceremony.

“Being an aid station, we are a platoon-sized unit; not a really large



The Task Force 1-35 aid station staff poses for a group picture after receiving certificates of recognition from Col. Anthony Young, chief of staff for the 30th Medical Brigade, Nov. 7 in Baghdad, Iraq.

setup,” Carlos said. “Since we have been here, we have constantly pushed the limit of how many patients we can care for.” The type of care provided by the aid station, said Carlos, varies from treating the common cold or flu, to caring for combat-related injuries, such as severe burns or gunshot wounds.

He said that he and his comrades were happy to receive some recognition for their hard work.

On top of their medical duties, the station staff also has to perform standard Soldier duties. Tasks such as pulling guard duty and radio watch have to be worked into what has turned out to be a hectic, ever-

changing schedule, Carlos said.

“There are a lot of young men out here doing great things. This operation has been many of these medics’ first experience with trauma in war, and we saved a lot of lives and limbs,” said Marks. “They will be well prepared to do so in the future.”

Holiday notes

Germans extend holiday invitations

German organizations and city officials are extending an invitation to families of Soldiers to participate in several holiday events. Reservations must be made so that event organizers can make better arrangements for those who participate. The following events are scheduled for American families:

The Mayor of Berglangenbach, a village near Baumholder, invites 50 American family members (spouses and children) to their Christmas Market Nov. 29. The bus departs from the Hall of Champions at 3 p.m. and returns at 6 p.m. The village will offer treats to the children and spouses. Reservations must be made by Nov. 26.

The City of Baumholder fasching club and lifeguard association invites 150 American family members (spouses and children) to a German-American children’s Advent coffee Nov. 30 in the city’s Bruehlhalle the program begins at 2 p.m. Reservations must be made by Nov. 26.

A Christmas coffee for 20 American spouses and their children is being hosted by Volkmar Pees, Baumholder district mayor and Klaus Rickes, Baumholder city mayor, at the “washrack” gasthaus from 3 – 5 p.m. Dec. 12. Reservations must be made by Dec. 2.

To sign up for any of these events call Bridget Sanders at mil 485-8188 or civ (06783) 6-8188.

Some cribs banned by customs

We’ve all read and heard the warnings about mailing banned items like meat or agricultural products to the states. Shoppers buying holiday gifts can now add nativity scenes to that list. Many European countries have a tradition of making nativity scenes at Christmas time. However, the natural products used to make them are often banned from import because of the agricultural pests that could be nested in them. Materials that are banned include pinecones, moss, bark and untreated straw.

Department of Agriculture officials say people sending nativity scenes that are produced using stripped wood, plastic, or commercially cleaned and lacquered straw are good to go. However, people can be fined \$100 and more if they mail scenes that contain moss, bark, pinecones, untreated straw or other materials found to contain insects.

For more information on this topic call mil 381-7189/8320.



Photo by Bernd “Bernie” Mai

Remembering those who served

A garrison flag is lowered by a special flag detail Nov. 11. The Baumholder flew the large flag along with the POW/MIA flag during Veteran’s Day in honor of all Veterans. Several residents gathered for the event which also included a wreath laying ceremony honoring all veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country, and comments from Lt. Col. Todd A. Buchs, 222nd Base Support Battalion commander. The wreath laying ceremony was conducted by Baumholder’s Iron Rock Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2566.

Residents 'clean up' during fall cleanup

By Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

222nd Base Support Battalion
Public Affairs Office

The residents of Building 8060 in Smith Housing were treated to pizza and bowling Nov. 6 by Lt. Col. Todd A. Buchs, 222nd Base Support Battalion commander. It wasn't anyone's birthday nor did the commander lose a bet. It was Buchs' way of rewarding them for winning the community fall housing area cleanup.

"You have set an extremely high standard here and that's a good thing because I'm going to bring a lot of people buy here to let them see what it means to care about your building and your community," Buchs told the residents who gathered in front of their building to receive the award. Behind them was the fruit of their labor, neatly mani-

cured flower beds lined with heather and white chrysanthemums and a trim and trash-free lawn. At the entrance to each stairwell the residents placed flower pots billowing with yellow chrysanthemums trimmed with American flags.

"I just want to thank all of you for what you've done. It really does help us all have a better community out here and that's what it's all about," said Buchs.

In addition to the free bowling passes and tickets for five free pizzas, Buchs also presented the residents of Building 8060 with a plaque commemorating their award.

Fall cleanup is nothing new to the community but recognition by the 222nd BSB for a job well done is new and it was started as an incentive to get people into the groove of making the community better.



Photo by Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

Lt. Col. Todd A. Buchs, 222nd Base Support Battalion commander, thanks the residents of Building 8060 on Smith Barracks for a job well done during this year's fall cleanup initiative. Buchs presented them with numerous awards for their efforts.

Inprocess focuses on family members

By Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

222nd Base Support Battalion
Public Affairs Office

Offering family members the same inprocessing opportunities that are mandatory for soldiers is a new concept for U.S. Army Europe military personnel processing officials but not for Baumholder's central inprocessing facility.

"We started our program back in November of 2002," said Susan Mitchell, chief of Baumholder's central inprocessing facility.

The Family Member Inprocessing Program, sometimes known as the Greeter Program, was actually an initiative of Brig. Gen. Fred D. Robinson Jr., who was Baumholder's senior tactical commander at the time, and Lt. Col. Todd A. Buchs, 222nd Base Support Battalion commander.

When Robinson arrived he asked Mitchell, "How do you inprocess Soldiers? How do you inprocess their family members?" Mitchell told Robinson that Baumholder had a very good program for inprocessing Soldiers but admitted that "family member focus was really quite lacking."

Robinson and Buchs then tasked Mitchell to find out what families wanted to have happen during inprocessing. From there, a program was put together based on an earlier survey of family members that focused exactly on this topic.

The survey revealed that spouses felt they were shut out of several information avenues. Spouses were eager to learn about housing, household goods and

transportation and car issues. "Spouses said they spent the first three or four days sitting at a hotel with nobody greeting them, nobody telling them what was going on. So of course, they were very depressed and unhappy," said Mitchell.

The first step was to designate someone who would be devoted strictly to family members, whose time and attention wouldn't be split between Soldiers and family members. "That's where Colonel Buchs stepped in and authorized us to hire someone who would do nothing but be a greeter," said Mitchell.

The heartbeat of the Family Member Inprocessing Program is the greeter, who meets the Soldiers and families as they pull up, before they even step off the bus. "When the soldiers go with the processing clerks to turn in their records, the families go with Dana Stone, our greeter," said Mitchell. They get a welcome letter from Buchs and other information like emergency numbers, where to find internet service and places to eat. She also goes over the inprocessing schedule with them.

While spouses cannot be forced into participating, the program actually enjoys almost 100 percent involvement. "What we tell the spouses is 'tomorrow you'll come back in, we say it that way, you'll come back in with your husband and you'll go through Tricare and ACS,'" said Mitchell.

If family members are undecided at this point, the catcher comes when they are told they will go to housing. "As soon as you tell them you are taking them to housing,

they will find a way to come in because that's the most important thing to them," said Mitchell.

"This is the meat of the program because they now come back in with the Soldier the very next day and go through certain parts of inprocessing with the Soldier," she said.

To ease the burden on spouses, free child care is provided for the first day for children 5 and under. Children 6 and older go with intro on their tour. "We have a little scavenger hunt to keep them occupied," said Mitchell.

Some of the other areas covered include predeployment briefings, drivers testing, head start language courses and communication services like Telecom and TKS.

"We provide predeployment briefings because as Soldiers are coming in they're also getting ready to leave," said Donna Finney, ACS chief.

The ACS predeployment briefing is conducted one-one-one with the Soldier and his family. "It's not, you need to have a will, it's, let me see the will. Do you have a power of attorney? Let me see your power of attorney and let's make sure it's going to take care of the right things. What's the family care plan? What happens if the Soldier is in Iraq and the mother has an accident? Who's going to take care of the children? Who's going to put their arms around their children? We do all that as part of inprocessing and then they're turned over to the FRGs," said Finney.

When the Soldier is doing his finance inprocessing the spouses

go with the greater and have their own orientation. A Baumholder senior spouse hosts that orientation and they go over housing information, banking information, how to get access to money, schools, education center information and other community issues.

One of the biggest features of the Family Member Inprocessing Program is the central location where soldiers and families arrive that does not create a bad first impression. "This was important to Robinson when he first became involved with improving the program for family members," said Mitchell.

Soldiers and families now have a special room at the Logerhoff Gasthaus that was renovated specifically for this purpose. While the soldiers are there, the spouses go up to the lounge with the greeter. All of their billeting arrangements are taken care of. "We go as far as picking up their keys, if they are staying in the Lagerhoff, and have them there when they arrive.

"We also have three battalions that actually send somebody down to greet the families when they find out they have someone coming into their unit," said Mitchell.

After a year, the Family Member Inprocessing Program has revealed that families new to Baumholder want and need all this information. "We've only had about three or four people who have decided, 'no, I've been here before, I'm not interested. I don't need that information,'" said Mitchell.

Everybody else is very anxious because it's so unusual for them to be told 'we want you to be involved.

We want you to be a part of the Soldier's inprocessing.' Plus there's times when the soldier perhaps doesn't hear everything that's said. In this case, two sets of ears are better than one," said Mitchell. "It seems to have really improved a lot of people's attitudes," she said.

Return customers have also become a common occurrence at central inprocessing.

"After spouses have been here a while they'll come back in and talk to Dana, just to find out, now that they're settled, what sort of fun things there are to do in the area, you know, what kind of trips can they go on, where is the good shopping.

"It's like they have one point of contact now where they really feel comfortable going to. All the feedback that we've heard has been extremely positive," said Mitchell.

It's no secret that stress and moving go hand in hand but "these young families, they're coming over here and the Soldier is deploying. If they're new to the Army, new to Europe, in addition to stress they can have a feeling of isolation," said Finney.

"We're a family here and it's scary to move so we want to get them settled. We want to make sure they know that we care and we want to get them prepared right off the bat for a family separation, if it happens," said Finney.

"This was the commander's vision. He saw the FRGs, ACS and central processing as a triangle working together to integrate families into the community," said Finney.

Burg Lichtenberg celebrates a medieval Christmas



Photo by Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

Burg Lichtenberg overlooks the village of Thallichtenberg. The fortress hosts a medieval Christmas market beginning Nov. 29.

The first medieval Christmas market at the Burg Lichtenberg youth hostel is scheduled for the first Advent weekend, Nov. 29 and 30. The market opens with a real bang at 2 p.m. Nov. 29 as a traditional gun salute by "Boellerschuetzen" will break the otherwise calm atmosphere within the fortress walls. Minstrel singers in colorful costumes playing a variety of string instruments will entertain the audience on both days.

The Kusel gospel choir and the "Viertakter" a popular men's choir will perform on at 6 p.m. Nov. 29 in the tent. The fortress, built in the 12th Century, with its 423 square meters, is one of the largest in Germany. It is one of the main attractions in the Kusel/Baumholder region and its atmosphere of days

gone by will be resurrected with this medieval spectacle. Visitors will be transported back to medieval days and experience the atmosphere of simpler times.

Historical costumes and exhibits will set the mood for time travelers and a variety of food specialties will be available to curb the most discriminating appetites.

A performance by the knights of Glanteler, complete with swords, a fire-eater, and falconry will help enrich the quality of the medieval spectacle. Archery will be available for the children as well as supervised handcraft sessions. A live nativity scene will also be on display.

For directions on how to find Burg Lichtenberg call Public Affairs at mil 485-1600/6191.

Students adopt deployed Soldier

By Frank X. O'Gara
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Spc. Jerry Engel may be deployed to Iraq, far from family and friends, but he is not forgotten. Engel became an "adopted" Soldier from Melody Nielsen's 7th and 8th grade seminar class at Baumholder American High School this year.

The initiative came about when a BAHS paraprofessional and spouse of another deployed Soldier, Deloura Clark-Rodgers, contacted her husband, Staff Sgt. Rodgers in Iraq who is Engel's sergeant. Rodgers emailed a picture of Engel and letter expressing his interests.

The class then "adopted" Engel. The class and teacher began by buying needed personal items, magazines and food to send him. Engel is part of the Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, deployed to Iraq from Baumholder.

In the first package, along with a variety of items, a letter was sent to Engel that included questions from each student and the teacher. A picture of the class was also enclosed.

In the second and third packages, the students sent Engel letters with the items they bought. They wrote about themselves - and asked Engel questions about himself. The teacher continued to buy items that Engel would enjoy or need, hoping to role model for the

students - even though most of them knew what Engel would need as they also had a parent in Iraq. The students needed occasional reminders to bring items to school before the package was shipped. In a special Halloween package, a Halloween card and items that related to Halloween were sent.

Together, Clark-Rodgers and Nielsen developed a special bulletin board about Iraq. In November, the class received a prayer rug and beads from Engel, which was put on the bulletin board. On the board is a letter Engel wrote to the class answering the students' questions and telling about his family and home in the United States.

Nielsen recently sent a letter home to the students' parents informing them of future plans for sending Engel Thanksgiving and Christmas packages. A card will be included in the November package as well as food, personal items, and magazines. Included in the Christmas box, besides the food and other items, will be individual Christmas presents from each student, Clark-Rodgers and Nielsen, and a framed picture of the class.

The idea has caught on and other seminar classes are sponsoring deployed Soldiers who have no family in Baumholder.

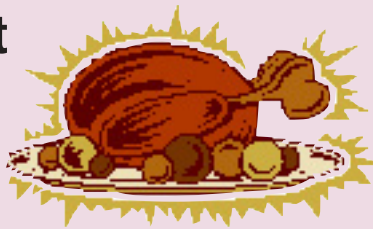
Every two or three weeks, classes send a box containing student letters, pictures and items including toiletries, food, and fun items such as nerf footballs.



Photo by Terri Toone

From left, Baumholder American High School studentss Nadine Ritchey, Cornell Grate and Stephanie Rodriguez view the various artifacts and a letter from their adopted Soldier, Spc. Jerry Engel. The adoption program has caught on and six other classes have stepped up and adopted a Baumholder soldier deployed to Iraq.

Thanksgiving meals served up at Baumholder dining facilities



Baumholder's Strassburg and 2nd Brigade dining facilities will offer a traditional Thanksgiving Day meal Nov. 27 from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. The meals will be open to family members and guests. The cost for family members of E-1 through E-4 is \$4.55 and all others pay \$5.25.

The menu is extensive and includes generous portions of roast turkey, honey glazed duck, southern style greens, cranberry sauce, candied sweet potatoes and more.

For dessert, customers can line their plate with assorted pastries, apple pie, strawberry shortcake, ice cream, assorted decorated cakes and much more.

For the complete menu tune to Baumholder's Command Information Channel, available to all residents in Wetzel, Champion, Smith, Neubrück and Strassburg housing as well as in all soldier barracks.

